

Message Text

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ACTION STR-04

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 STRE-00 OIC-02 AGR-05 AF-10
ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07
FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 EPG-02 AID-05 SS-15 ITC-01 TRSE-00
PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00 OMB-01 /134 W
-----101730Z 118588 /53

O 101637Z MAY 77
FM USDEL MTN GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2448

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ACTION STR

H PASS CODEL

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD MTN
SUBJECT: MTN: TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP; INFORMAL MEETING PRIOR TO
SEVENTH MEETING OF GROUP

1. GATT SECRETARIAT HELD INFORMAL MEETING OF PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN TROPICAL PRODUCTS (TP) NEGOTIATIONS TUESDAY, MAY 10, TO REVIEW SCENARIO FOR MAY 12-13 MEETING OF TP GROUP. TP GROUP CHAIRMAN, AMBASSADOR MARTINEZ OF ARGENTINA, NOTED THAT AGENDA INCLUDED THREE PRINCIPAL TOPICS: (A) REVIEW OF CONCESSIONS OR CONTRIBUTIONS MADE; (B) STATUS OF BILATERAL/PLURILATERAL CONSULTATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN HELD; (C) FUTURE WORK PROGRAM.

2. INFORMAL MEETING WAS VERY LOW KEY. MANY PRINCIPAL DC AND LDC DELEGATIONS DID NOT MAKE STATEMENTS. CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMON MARKET (CACM) REPRESENTATIVE
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SENTATIVE, BARAHONA, SAW NEED FOR "NEW MECHANISM" TO OVERCOME IMPASSE IN TP GROUP. HE MENTIONED NEED FOR SOME MULTILATERALIZATION OR PLURILATERALIZATION OF CONSULTATIONS. HE ALSO SUGGESTED GATT SECRETARIAT PREPARE A JOINT LIST OF LDC REQUESTS IN THE TP GROUP WHICH HAD NOT YET BEEN ANSWERED. HE NOTED THAT THIS LIST OF UNFULFILLED REQUESTS IN TP GROUP COULD ALSO

BE USED FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS IN OTHER MTN GROUPS,
SUCH AS TARIFFS AND AGRICULTURE.

3. AMBASSADOR JARAMILLO (COLOMBIA), SPEAKING FOR
ANDEAN GROUP, SAID OFFERS THAT HAD BEEN IMPLEMENTED
WERE NOT OF MUCH VALUE TO ANDEANS. HE ALSO NOTED
THAT THE ANDEAN GROUPS'S "LARGEST MARKET" HAD NOT YET
IMPLEMENTED ITS OFFER AND LOOKED FOR A POSITIVE STEP,
I.E., BY US, IN ORDER THAT ITS POSITION WOULD NOT
CONTINUE TO ADVERSELY AFFECT THE WORK OF THE GROUP.
HE REPEATED VIEW OF COLOMBIA THAT THEY WOULD MAKE
CONTRIBUTION GLOBALLY TO MTN, AND NOT WITHIN CONTEXT
OF TP NEGOTIATIONS. HE BELIEVED TP GROUP SHOULD
REMAIN IN BEING TO EXAMINE -- OTHER AREA -- WHAT IS
HAPPENING TO TROPICAL PRODUCTS OF INTEREST TO LDCS
IN OTHER MTN GROUPS. HE ALSO NOTED THAT ELIMINATION
OF NTMS ON PRODUCTS OF INTEREST TO LDCS SHOULD BE
CONSIDERED. ONE POSSIBILITY FOR FURTHER WORK IN TP
GROUP WOULD BE PLURILATERAL CONSULTATIONS OF TWO OR
MORE LDC DELEGATIONS WITH INTEREST IN SAME PRODUCT
IN DC MARKET.

4. NIGERIA (ADEWAKUN) NOTED THAT MANY OF THE CONTRI-
BUTIONS MADE IN TP NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEEN GSP, AND THAT
GSP IN PAST HAD NOT BEEN FULLY USED BY MANY COUNTRIES
DUE TO VARIOUS CONDITIONS THAT HAD BEEN ATTACHED TO IT.
HE SUGGESTED THAT A SUMMARY OF THESE CONDITIONS
(INCLUDING THE EXPECTED DURATION OF THE CONCESSION)
SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO GSP OFFER. CHAIRMAN MARINEZ
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NOTED THAT QUESTION OF EVENTUAL "COMPENSATION" FOR GSP
TP OFFERS, WHEN THEY WERE WITHDRAWN OR MODIFIED, WAS AN
IMPORTANT QUESTION.

5. CANADA (GORE) NOTED THAT GSP CONCESSIONS IN TP
NEGOTIATIONS WERE UNILATERAL AND NONRECIPROCAL, AND
WERE MEANT TO BE TEMPORARY. HE NOTED CANADIAN OPPOSITION
IN PRINCIPLE TO PLURILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS, NOTING THAT
CANADIAN EXPERIENCE HAD BEEN THAT CONCRETE PROGRESS
WAS ONLY POSSIBLE ON A DETAILED, BILATERAL, PRODUCT-BY-
PRODUCT BASIS OF CONSULTATIONS IN WHICH SPECIFIC TRADE
INTEREST OF REQUESTING COUNTRY WAS SPELLED OUT. HE
WAS NOT CONVINCED THAT ANYTHING COULD BE GAINED BY
BROADENING THE CONSULTATIONS TO INCLUDE A LARGE NUMBER
OF REQUESTING COUNTRIES. HE ALSO NOTED THAT CANADA
DID NOT FORESEE ANY IMPROVEMENT IN ITS TP OFFER EXCEPT
IN THE OVERALL CONTEXT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND OTHER
MTN GROUPS. AUSTRALIA (RYAN) SAID THAT AUSTRALIA ALSO
WAS NOT PREPARED TO MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

TO THE TP NEGOTIATIONS.

6. US DEL (GRAEF) MADE BRIEF STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO COLOBIAN DEL THAT REITERATED US POSITION OF NOT MAKING UNILATERAL CONCESSIONS IN THE MTN, BUT NOTING THAT IT HAD HELD SOME SERIOUS AND CONSTRUCTIVE CONSULTATIONS SINCE OCTOBER MEETING, AND WAS WILLING TO ENGAGE IN CONSULTATIONS WITH ANY DELEGATION AT ANY TIME.

7. COMMENT: MEETING WAS SURPRISINGLY LOW-KEY, WITH FOCUS ON FUTURE WORK PROGRAM AND "VALUE" OF GSP CONTRIBUTIONS. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO IMMEDIATE SUPPORT FOR CACM PROPOSAL, IT POSSIBLE THAT LDCS (WHO ARE CAUCUSING MAY 11) MAY UNIFY AROUND SOME PROCEDURAL PROPOSAL. IN ANY EVENT, WE EXPECT THAT US POSITION OF BEING ONLY DC NOT HAVE IMPLEMENTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A TP OFFER WILL BE SUBJECT TO FREQUENT CRITICISM.WALKER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, TROPICAL PRODUCTS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MTNGE03578
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770164-0923
Format: TEL
From: MTN GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770574/aaaacmdv.tel
Line Count: 140
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b2104597-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION STR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2583532
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MTN: TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP; INFORMAL MEETING PRIOR TO SEVENTH MEETING OF GROUP
TAGS: ETRD, MTN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b2104597-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009